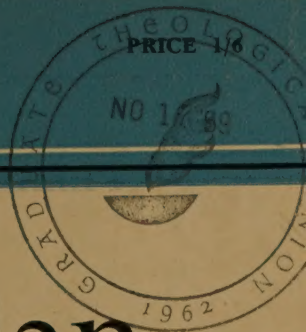


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ONE

# Christian Order

## Summary of Contents for May 1969

THE LAYMAN COMES INTO HIS OWN	<i>John Murray, S.J.</i>
THE WORK OF THE LAYMAN	<i>Francis Fenn, S.J.</i>
CZECHOSLOVAKIA: THE REASON WHY	<i>Paul Crane, S.J.</i>
YOU AND YOUR WORK	<i>J. F. McDonald</i>
NEW LOOK FOR PENSIONS	<i>J. M. Jackson</i>
THE SINO-SOVIET CLASH	<i>E. L. Way</i>

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MAY, 1969

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Paul Crane, S.J.

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# Contents

Page

258 CHURCH AND SOCIETY  
*The Editor*

260 THE WORK OF THE LAYMAN  
*Francis Fenn, S.J.*

265 A CHANGING CHURCH  
IN A CHANGING WORLD  
*John Murray, S.J.*

274 AUTHORITY AND REASON  
*The Editor*

283 THE SINO-SQVIET CLASH  
*E. L. Way*

289 YOU AND YOUR WORK  
*J. F. McDonald*

300 NEW LOOK FOR PENSIONS  
*J. M. Jackson*

307 ANY QUESTIONS?  
*William Lawson, S.J.*

313 BOOK REVIEWS  
*Paul Crane, S.J.*

**CHRISTIAN ORDER** is a monthly magazine devoted to the promulgation of Catholic Social Teaching and incisive comment on current affairs in Church and State; at home and abroad; in the political, social and industrial fields.

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# Christian Order

EDITED BY

Paul Crane SJ

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## Church and Society

THE EDITOR

ONE pressing task of the contemporary Church is to influence the shape of society in the direction demanded by respect for human dignity. The implications of this statement are important. They are worth at least a moment's study.

To be effective, influence must be exercised at the key-points of society; its nerve-centres where decisions are taken that affect the dignity of its citizens as human beings and, thereby, their opportunity of serving God. It is these nerve-centres, therefore, that the Church must touch, for her business is man's service of God. The trouble is that, in her institutional capacity, she cannot do so effectively without running the risk of destroying herself. The reason lies in the location of society's nerve-centres. These are found in the political, trade-union, industrial, welfare and, in the developing countries, rural fields. It is here that the decisions are taken that affect the dignity of the citizen. It is here, therefore, that day-to-day influence must be exercised by the Church. This, however, is precisely what the Institutional Church cannot do. Were she to attempt it, she would make a mockery of her transcendence and incur the risk of self-destruction through factional dispute. Moreover, in newly independent countries where sensitive governments jealous of their powers are taking much into their own hands, any move of the Institutional Church into the fields named above

would be classified as interference in politics.

Of course, the Church does seek to influence society in general fashion through the promulgation of principles that govern social and civic life and protest against the injustices of public authority. To be effective, however, principles must be put into practice, whilst protest presumes that injustice has already been done. Yet the whole idea is to prevent injustice from occurring. To this end, principles must be brought to bear at the key points in every range of society where decisions are taken each day that affect man and his dignity. The dilemma is a real one. The Church is meant to influence society in support of human dignity; but this is precisely what she cannot do effectively in her institutional capacity. What, then, is she to do?

The dilemma is resolved once it is realised that the Catholic layman, acting in his individual capacity as a responsible Christian citizen, is meant to permeate society with Christian principle. It is his presence, not that of the Institutional Church, at all points where decisions are taken, that should shape contemporary society in the direction demanded by regard for human dignity. The Council said as much on a good many occasions. Pope Paul repeated it in *Populorum Progressio*:

"In countries undergoing development no less than in others, the laymen should take up as their proper task the renewal of the temporal order. If the role of the Hierarchy is to teach and to interpret authentically the norms of morality to be followed in this matter, it belongs to the laymen without waiting passively for directives, to take the initiative freely and to infuse a Christian spirit into the mentality, customs, laws and structures of the community in which they live. Changes are necessary, basic reforms are indispensable; the laymen should strive resolutely to permeate them with the spirit of the Gospel."

If one-tenth of the attention paid to *Humanae Vitae* had been paid to these words and effective lay action taken, Christian influence in the contemporary world would now be a force to be reckoned with. It is not too late to begin.

“Christians”, says Fr. Fenn “are the priests of the world.” By their daily labours, prayers, family life, and hardships patiently borne the laity consecrate the world itself to God. And in their difficulties, and when they need instruction in depth about Christ they should be able to turn to their pastors.

## The Work of the Layman

FRANCIS FENN, S.J.

“ONE hundred and fifty devoted worshippers being slowly led by their priest to turn outwards to a greater social awareness. . . .” This was about a Church of England parish in an article I was reading in my Sunday newspaper. It contains, for any parish, two very important truths; and also a half-truth of the sort that is better than no truth at all. This is contained in those words “a greater social awareness”, as I shall later explain. The two truths concern the work of the priest to lead, and to lead people to “turn outwards”. We will deal with this one first.

I am talking about something of which I have had personal experience (though not in this country) when I say that too much Catholic spiritual and parochial life is “in-growing”, turned in upon itself. “God has done so much for you”, writes a priest in his parish bulletin, “cannot you afford a quarter-of-an-hour to spend before Him in the Blessed Sacrament?” This was about an Exposition or Forty Hours Prayer.

“God . . . . Him” may be the slip of a busy priest’s pen. It is the Incarnate and crucified Son of God who is present in the Blessed Sacrament :

“The devotion which leads the faithful to visit the Blessed Sacrament draws them into an ever deeper participation in the Paschal Mystery. It leads them to respond gratefully to the gift of him who through his

humanity constantly pours divine life into the members of his body . . . they offer their entire lives with Christ to the Father in the Holy Spirit, and receive in this wonderful exchange an increase of faith, hope and charity." (1)

But our parish bulletin, perhaps for lack of space, does not give people any motive for spending fifteen minutes before the Blessed Sacrament, exposed or not. Is it just for our own "spiritual good"? Or is it to gain strength to make some return for his love by showing love to others? "By this we know love, that he laid down his life for us; and we ought to lay down our lives for our brethren" (2).

In what seems to me a very fine passage, the Vatican Council says:

"In the family, parents have the task of training their children from childhood to recognise God's love for all men. Especially by example they should teach them little by little to show concern for the material and spiritual needs of their neighbour" (3).

Not only, of course, of their "next-door" neighbour. In some countries there is the danger that concern for others may be restricted to those of a man's own family and relations: in England we still feel little responsibility for people beyond the Channel, though television has helped to bring home to us the reality of such human situations as those in Biafra and Vietnam. It remains true, however, that charity begins at home, even though it should not end there.

"Material and spiritual needs". A century ago, "missionary" concern was almost entirely with the "souls" of men. Today we might consider this hypocrisy, and the emphasis tends to be almost exclusively on men's temporal or bodily needs. "A greater social awareness", in my original quotation, can be read as a half-truth in this sense. We must see, and teach our children to see other human beings as persons, with an earthly life which is of importance precisely in view of an eternal destiny. As it is, we so often regard them as

(1) *Instruction on the Eucharistic Mystery*, 1967; art. 50.

(2) I John 3, 16. For the personal consequences, read on to v. 23

(3) *Documents of Vatican II*, p. 518.

part of the furniture of this world, or with the blind man on his way to recovery : " I see men, but they look like trees, walking ". (4)

This attitude cannot really be overcome except by prayer, which means entering into the mind of God where people are concerned. This should not be difficult, since as Christians we all have access to God our Father through the Heart of Jesus Christ. We can exercise this prayer even as we walk along the street; thank God for that person (whom we do not even know) and the gifts God has given him or her. Pray that these gifts may be used for human good and so for the glory of God. We can easily use the mysteries of the Rosary as prayer for others; the Joyful for parents and children, the Sorrowful for those in mental or bodily distress. This sort of prayer exercises our God-centred concern for others.

Christians are the priests of the world : " a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices to God through Jesus Christ " (5):

" All their works, prayers and apostolic endeavours, their ordinary married and family life, their daily labour, their mental and physical relaxation, carried out in the Spirit, and even the hardships of life, if patiently borne; all of these become spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. During the celebration of the Eucharist, these sacrifices are most lovingly offered to the Father along with the Lord's body. Thus . . . the laity consecrates the world itself to God." (6)

This work of meditation between the world and God, with our sacrifices absorbed in the Sacrifice of Christ, brings down the gift of the Spirit. Through the Spirit we become witnesses to God before the world (7), making credible the Good News of Christ's rising from the dead in the only real way; by living it. By the Spirit we are empowered to devote ourselves to the service of our fellow-men. Much of what the Council said about the laity in " missionary " countries is also true of our own situation (8).

(4) Mark 8, 24.

(5) I Peter 2, 5.

(6) *Documents*, p. 60.

(7) Philippians 2, 15; Matthew 5, 13-16. (8) *Documents* p. 598 (12), 610 (21).

But this mediation of Christ (and of his People with him) also brings the Holy Spirit into the world at large, so that we find the Spirit's influence in even the most unexpected places. Men awoken to the existence of their brethren. We need never stand alone, and a work does not need to be labelled Christian or Catholic for us to take part in it. The people who had helped their brethren are surprised, at the Last Judgment (9), that they had been helping Christ: the story even suggests that they may not have known there was Christ at all.

We must now turn to the second truth to which I referred at the start; that the laity need the leadership of their clergy.

"Let pastors recognise and promote the dignity as well as the responsibility of the layman in the Church. . . . Let them train the laity to become conscious of the responsibility which as members of Christ they bear for all men. Let them instruct them deeply in the mystery of Christ, introduce them to practical methods, and be at their side in difficulties". (10)

Although the Council teaches that the layman's active penetration of the world should follow from his active participation in the Eucharist, this is not something that follows automatically, without guidance. If this guidance is not given, the layman tends to sit back and relax, for "if we give his hands nothing to do, his mind falls asleep or grows bored or is reassured in its worst assumptions — that the Christian has no task . . . that the mind can be Christian and the hands remain idle". (11)

This does not mean joining a parish society, or not necessarily that. Indeed our parish structures often need to be examined to see if they are really suited to the work of the People of God in the world today. Are they capable of making use of the intelligence and competence of lay Catholics? In the work of penetrating the world the layman, given guidance, is naturally competent. (12)

(9) Matthew 25, 37-40.

(10) *Documents*, pp. 64, 612.

(11) *They Call us Dead Men*, by D. Berrigan, S.J., p. 83.

(12) *Documents*, p. 57 (31).

Though Christians, like other men, tend to gather into groups, more or less formal in nature, for action (13), yet individuals also have a work to do. (14) A group of Christian laypeople, gathered together to do Christ's work, have the promise of his presence (15), and they should not find it too difficult to make a Christian judgment as to what needs doing in their environment and to set to work to do it.

Some works undertaken by laypeople need special preparation (16) — that given at Claver House for social action is an example. And here is a resolution of the Third World Congress of the Lay Apostolate in its section on ecumenical work :

“ Since the laity are increasingly engaged in ecumenical dialogue . . . all the participants feel the need for a better doctrinal formation. This should be of a general kind and prepare the laity to participate in dialogue of a doctrinal nature. Many participants suggested that basic to this formation should be the common study in depth of the Bible.” (17)

But whether our work is done as individuals or in groups, whether it is simple or more specialised, we must never forget that its centre is the Eucharist. Our work is offered with Christ's, and we become afresh what we receive — the Body of Christ through which he lives and acts in the world.

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(13) *Documents* p. 508 (18).

(14) *ibid* p. 506 (16-17).

(15) Matt. 18, 20.

(16) *Documents* p. 519 (31).

(17) *One in Christ*, Vol. IV, No. 4.

# A Changing Church in a Changing World

## IV. The Layman Comes Into His Own

JOHN MURRAY, S.J.

THE Church is the community or fellowship of all those who recognize and accept Jesus Christ as the *unique* person, through whom and in whom God has made His *unique* revelation, and communicated His life and truth. Theologically, He is the Son of God, Jesus Christ, yesterday and today, the same for ever. All members of the Church are baptized in Christ, linked with Christ, form part of the Mystical Body of Christ. And all share in their way in the offices of Christ; the priestly and prophetic offices. Christians, in the words of the New Testament, are a holy and royal priesthood, just as they all share in Christ's prophetic office when they proclaim Christ and witness to Christ in their lives. But here is the cogent question; who are these Christians? They are, overwhelmingly, to 99 and even 99.9 per cent, what we know as laymen and laywomen.

However, the Church has always recognised within itself a continuing priesthood; a priesthood to offer sacrifice and to "mediate" between God and man and to bring to man through the channels of the sacraments the grace of God. It has the further office of teaching and of administration. Christ gave to the apostles a mission, an authority and a guarantee, all intimately associated with this priesthood. The Church recognizes a double line of authority: from the college of the apostles to the bishops, and from Peter, the head of the apostles, to the Pope. For Catholics, as also for the Orthodox churches, the notes of Episcopacy warrant of Christ Himself. In addition, the Church contains religious orders, with men and women dedicated to God by special

vows: these too have their special status within the Church.

*But who are the Laity ?*

The twentieth century has been called the layman's century, and certainly the position and responsibility of the laity has been strongly emphasized by the Vatican Council. What the Council has said is not really new, but it had been for so long ignored or treated as irrelevant that it comes as a fresh discovery. In the past, the laity were taken too much for granted, both by the clergy and by themselves: they were the taught and not the teachers; the flock, not the shepherds; their full status was rarely understood. The very word "laity" had a negative appearance; it signified not a cleric nor a religious. In point of fact, it is a positive term, taken like so many of our Christian terms from the original Greek, and it means a member of the "laos", the *people of God*.

*Spiritual Dignity*

The Council decrees ("*On the Church*", chapter 2) begin with the spiritual status and privilege of Christians. They are the new people of God, making their pilgrim journey through the world and seeking the abiding city which is to come. Christ established this people as a Church and filled it with His Spirit. He made it a visible society with its principle of unity and peace.

All Christians have their share in Christ's priesthood, though there remains an essential distinction between the priesthood of those who are consecrated and ordained and the priesthood of the laity. The ordained priest offers the sacrifice of the Eucharist in the name of God's people. In virtue of their priesthood, the faithful join in the offering of the Eucharist; they exercise this priesthood in receiving the sacraments, in praying to God and giving Him generous thanks; they express it also in living lives of holiness, self-denial and active charity.

This priestly character of the laity is brought out in the Church's sacraments. In baptism they are incorporated into the Church and have the duty to profess the faith. The bonds are drawn even closer in confirmation, which enriches them

with the strength of the Holy Spirit and gives them an even more rigorous obligation to bear witness to their faith. In the Eucharist they join in offering the Divine Victim and offer themselves to God. The sacrament of penance reconciles them with the Church which their sins had injured and which with prayer, charity and good works has been working for their conversion. In the anointing of the sick the whole Church recommends the sick to God, asking Him to bring them relief and salvation. The sacrament of marriage reflects the closeness and union that exist between Christ Himself and the Church. Inspired and safeguarded by all these means of salvation, the laity are called to holiness each one in his own way and measure under the grace of God.

This is, surely, a wonderful vision! An encouraging, uplifting, invigorating vision of the dignity and privilege of every Christian life.

### *Witnesses to Christ*

Laymen and laywomen share in Christ's prophetic office when they proclaim and bear witness to Christ. For that is what the word "prophetic" really indicates: not so much, to foretell the future, even if that was one of the functions of Old Testament prophets, but to *speak* openly and declare one's own convictions, and to express those convictions in the texture and fabric of one's lives. The layman and laywoman *speak forth Christ*, when they proclaim the truth taught by Christ and handed on within the Church, when they give utterance to the doctrines and principles that are at the basis of their lives, when they let the world know what they, as convinced Christians, sincerely have in mind. That is to give prophecy or witness unto Christ.

Now, what is special to this witness of the laity is that it is a witness *in* the world and *to* the world. For that is just *what* and *where* the Christian layman is. Clergy and religious, though concerned with events within the world, are by their very character withdrawn from it. They are no longer, as is the laity, in the world and of the world. The layman's witness arises out of his actual situation; it is a concrete witness, here and now, here and not there, as bachelor or

family man, as skilled or unskilled worker, as clerk or teacher or professional man. It begins at home, within the circle that is nearest and dearest in his human situation; it radiates outwards without ever losing touch with the roots from which it springs. It emerges from the concreteness of day to day happenings and interests and it develops through the living example that manifests the grace of God within the ordinary pattern of human life.

For this Christian lay witness, everything is grist to the mill; challenges that meet a man from his secular environment; opportunities that come his way or that rise out of the skills he has acquired or the crafts he has mastered or his position in the varying worlds of industry, science or education: social and political responsibilities which provide the occasion for putting into practice a Christian point of view. There are half a thousand different ways in which a convinced and courageous layman will find it possible to give this witness to Christ.

### *An Earnest Challenge*

The Church has a long—and sympathetic—understanding of human nature and knows perfectly well that such a challenge is a serious one and will call for faith and generosity. The Council decree on the laity makes this plain, while it blends encouragement with the note of challenge:

“To fulfil the mission of the Church in the world, the laity have certain basic needs. They need a life in harmony with their faith, so that they can become the light of the world. They need that undeviating honesty which can attract all men to the love of truth and goodness, and finally to the Church and to Christ. They need the kind of fraternal charity which will lead them to share in the living conditions, labour, sorrows and hopes of their fellow men, and which will gradually and imperceptively change the hearts of all around them for the saving work of grace. They need a full awareness of their role in building up society, an awareness which will keep them alive to the task of bringing Christian generosity to the fulfilment of their duties, whether

family, social or professional. If laymen can have these qualities, they will have an influence that will permeate, little by little, the whole setting of their life and work".

That is the total and inspiring — and at the same time challenging — vision of the Christian layman in the world of today.

### *Its Varying Aspects*

It is time now to break this down into a number of component portions. To begin with, we should distinguish work carried out by laymen and laywomen, which is not specifically *lay work*, but a share in the official teaching and pastoral operations of the Church. This is the work undertaken by Catholic teachers (fully, in the case of teachers of Christian doctrine, but to a real extent also, with all who teach) and by lay catechists, not least in missionary countries: and by regular choirmasters, for instance, and masters of ceremonies with the permanent members of altar staffs and choirs. These are usually laymen and laywomen but they are not acting precisely in their lay capacity; they are associated with the direct ministry of the Church. It would be truer to say that they are engaged in a kind of "clerical" function. It is evident that the laity will play an increasing role in activity of this sort. The only practical answer, for example, to the problem of priest shortage in Latin America is their replacement, so far as capacities and circumstances permit, by men and women who will undertake directly pastoral offices. There the Church may also develop the notion of an ordained diaconate, but there will always be room — and need — for the unordained but commissioned layman.

Akin to this quasi-clerical activity is the varied sum of Catholic activity that centres round the practical functioning of the parish church. This may be charitable, educative or merely social, as well as more strictly religious and devotional. How far the parish, as we know it, can remain the focus of Catholic life is questionable. On the one hand, the renewed emphasis on liturgy and on members of a parish as a liturgical community reinforces the traditional notion. But in large urban areas that may include from twenty to fifty

parishes, it is not easy to see how parishioners can form a liturgical or even social community, when only a small percentage of them will be present at some particular Sunday Mass and when many of them, for reasons of convenience, attend other churches. Besides, there is a clear trend towards a more "functional" apostolate, with chaplains for universities, the Forces, hospitals and prisons, with likely developments in the worlds of education and industry.

However, we have the parochial system with us, and some local system must continue. There has always been a healthy co-operation between clergy and laity, but this is meant to increase. The mind of the Church — to use an expression that is not always wisely employed — is encouraging this greater collaboration. There must first of all be more communication — of ideas, of special knowledge, of common interests and aspirations. Parish and diocesan councils are intended to further this, and to bring the laity more closely and concretely into the actual administration of Church affairs. The most recent Lenten pastoral for the Westminster archdiocese shows one practical method in which this mutual communication and co-operation can be suitably channelled. Throughout it all runs the need for a more genuine togetherness and effective brotherhood in the Church's practical life.

### *Catholic Action*

We should not forget, on the other hand, that this activity of Catholics (though not necessarily confined to Catholics) springs out of membership of the Church and is concerned in the main with the Church as a whole or with the local diocese or parish. Its purpose is to bring together and help Catholics in terms of material collaboration or social relationship or religious formation. But its direction is essentially inward or introvert. In it, we are concerned for the most part with ourselves. The same is valid for what has come to be known technically as Catholic Action in a diocese or country. This is the organized common action of Catholics for some specifically Catholic interest.

Such co-operation is, of course, highly necessary and desirable. It is the obvious expression of individual conviction and good will. Its degree of vigour and keenness is

a valuable touchstone for the spiritual health of the parish. It ought to be furthered and encouraged in every possible way.

Two comments, however, may well be added. The new vision of the laity in the Church is not exhausted by a greater participation by members of the Church in these various forms of Catholic Action. Such fuller participation, as I have said, will be always welcome and most valued. But today the Church visualises the layman's witness as a witness to Christ precisely in the world; there, where the individual Christian is living and working; among the men and women of all backgrounds and prejudices with whom he is in close relationship; in his office and factory or classroom; at the local golf course or football ground or club or pub; in fact, where he is and has his being, within the pattern of his ordinary existence. The clergy and religious have their office and work: they are to minister, that is to serve their fellow members by offering sacrifice, dispensing the sacraments, playing their part as teachers, counsellors and firm friends, attending the sick, caring for the distressed and feeble. The laity are, in the first place, witnesses to Christ — and to the truth of Christ and the relevance and reality of the Church of Christ — in this workaday world. And, as this western world becomes more and more the workaday and secular world; more estranged from spiritual vision and values, so much the more important and vital will be this Christian witness.

Fr. Karl Rahner, S.J., the German theologian, puts this point in his forceful way:

"In this world the layman has his determined place according to this historical situation, his people, family and calling, the individual possibilities furnished by his gifts and capabilities etc. And he has this place-in-the-world, basically independently of and prior to his Christianity; after all, he is born before he is re-born . . . . The layman is in the world in virtue of the *pre-Christian* (but not goodless) position of his existence; in *this* place, and not in any other, he is to be a Christian. This he must be, not just in addition, but by

Christianizing his original *pre-Christian* situation, which is the very essence of lay existence, in such a way that, where there is the world and not the Church, the kingdom of God may begin to exist through him as a member of the Church". (1).

### *The World their Kingdom*

The Council documents, *On the Church*, in chapter four, and *On the Laity*, amply confirm this interpretation which I have been stressing. They remind us that the laity have "their own special, secular character", that the world and its occasion are "the context of their existence". They are the bridge builders between the Church's teaching *magisterium* and the "peoples" for whom, in the last resort, the message of that *magisterium* is intended.

In the changing approach of the Church to the natural order and to man's immense achievement, the Christian laity has a most vital role: to understand and interpret that world as God's world and to see in man's achievement a remarkable co-operation between man and God. This they are qualified to do because of their special competence and standing in the arts and sciences. Their Christian faith and grasp of principles and standards should help them to utilize the resources of human labour, technology and civilization in accordance with God's purposes and for the more universal benefit and appreciation of all mankind. For they can and should envisage all these realities against the background of the Supreme Reality of God and in conformity with God's revealed designs for men.

Similarly, the laity are encouraged, where the proper knowledge and experience are present, to remedy and refashion the world's standards and values, to harmonize them with genuine justice and charity. In doing this, they will steep our human culture in abiding moral and social values, and make ready the ground for the eventual sowing and harvesting of the seed of the Divine Word.

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(1) *Theological Investigations*: vol. II, pp. 319 sqq.

### *Clergy and Laity Together*

This emphasis on the special character of lay Christian witness does not imply that clergy and laity will move apart. Far from it. They will require one another's support and collaboration far more urgently than they may appear to have done in the past. What it does imply is that there will be more of a balance between them, a balance that is a *Complement* rather than an equality; for, in the end, they have different functions.

The laity have a right to generous assistance from their clergy. They have the right — and even a duty — to make known their needs and wishes in a spirit of confident liberty. They should not hesitate, in all charity and courtesy, to offer their skilled and experienced opinion in matters of common concern for the Church.

In their turn, they should welcome advice and decisions. The clergy will gradually learn to adjust themselves, to encourage lay initiative, to help with spiritual formation. There will be growing pains, to be sure; but, after all, these are a sign and indeed the price of growth. We have St. Paul's warrant for our task of "building up the Body of Christ". Perhaps never before have our Christian laity understood how much of that responsibility belongs to them.

## CURRENT COMMENT

Father Paul Crane was recently called a prophet of gloom. He in no way resents this. His endeavour is to bear witness to the truth. If, by so doing, he seems gloomy, this cannot be helped. He is optimistic in the sense that he believes more strongly than ever in the abiding presence of the Holy Spirit of God within the Church today—in support of its authority, which is derided at present by so many Catholics who are without real understanding of the supernatural. Thus the debate within the Church today—particularly over *Humanae Vitae*—is best seen as a modern version of the old conflict between reason deemed sovereign and supernatural authority.

# Authority and Reason

THE EDITOR

A READER wrote me a very kind letter the other day in which he said he feared I was becoming a prophet of gloom. In my reply, I took the opportunity of reminding him that I was not interested, really, in whether my prognostications were gloomy or not. What interested me, I said, was only the truth. My endeavour always was to bear witness to the truth. If this brought gloom, it was a small price to pay in exchange for any effort to uphold the truth; to remind my fellow Catholics, during this time of upheaval in the Church, of those eternal guide-lines to which they must hold if they were to find peace and strength in their religion. Little good can come from telling people all is well when, in fact, things within the Church are in a very dangerous condition indeed. Those who are of an age to remember, will recall without difficulty

the wishful thinking which led Mr. Neville Chamberlain and many more to talk of "peace in our time" when this country was on the edge of catastrophe in the closing years of the thirties. Those who rejected their fatuous optimism and spoke of conflict to come were branded as prophets of gloom. Amongst them was Winston Churchill. It is unnecessary to ask who served his country best at the time, the then Prime Minister or his foremost opponent from within the ranks of the Conservative Party.

### **Gloom From the Holy Father**

Today, there is no greater prophet of gloom in the Church than the Holy Father himself—if the term is applied to one who warns others of the dangers inherent in present policies pursued by dissident groups within the Catholic community. Since the beginning of this year, Pope Paul has publicly warned the Faithful on repeated occasions of the false prophets within their midst and the false doctrines they advocate. At Easter, he struck in public a note of real anguish as he surveyed the havoc at present being caused within the Church. A quotation seems opportune. It is from the Holy Father's address at a public audience in St. Peters on Wednesday in Holy Week, April 2nd:

"Is the Church suffering today? Sons, beloved Sons! Yes, today the Church is undergoing great suffering! Is it possible? After the Council? Yes, after the Council. The Lord is testing us. The Church is suffering, as you know, from the oppressive lack of legitimate freedom in so many countries of the world. She is suffering at the abandonment by so many Catholics of the fidelity that her century-old tradition would deserve and her pastoral effort, full of understanding and love, should obtain. She is suffering above all because of the restless, critical, unruly and destructive rebellion of so many of her sons, her dearest sons—priests, teachers, laymen, dedicated to the service and witness of Christ dwelling in the living Church, against her intimate and indispensable communion, against her institutional existence, against

her canon law, her tradition, her interior cohesion; against her authority, the irreplaceable principle of truth, unity, charity; against her very requirements of holiness and sacrifice; she is suffering at the defection and scandal of certain ecclesiastics and religious, who are crucifying the Church today."

Here is a prophet of gloom indeed! Because he is, does this make it wrong to follow the Holy Father? Or is he doing the Faithful a disservice by telling them where present policies advocated by publicity-minded, 'pop' theologians have led them?

### St. John Stevas and the Holy Spirit

During these past months and especially since the publication of *Humanae Vitae* last July, I have been more conscious than ever of the presence of the Holy Spirit within the Church. This may sound a peculiar thing to say in view of the present turmoil. I am not thinking primarily of the turmoil, however, but of the superb way in which the Holy Father has stood out against it. At times, he must have felt utterly alone and forsaken—especially in the aftermath of the Encyclical—when so many within the Church rejected his authority in this matter and came close to deriding him openly. I shall never forget the disgraceful behaviour of the *Tablet* and *Catholic Herald* during this period, particularly the comments of Norman St. John Stevas in the latter paper. What, of course, Stevas failed utterly to see at the time was that, if the Pope was wrong in this matter of the pill, there was no reason *on earth* why he, St. John Stevas, should ever be right. There was, however, a reason *in Heaven* why the Pope could not be wrong in this case; and this, too, St. John Stevas failed to see. The name of the reason is the Holy Spirit of God. Infallibility apart, who could doubt for a single moment that, on a matter of such importance, debated so long and pronounced on in public by the Pope at such a difficult time, the Holy Spirit could ever fail the Holy Father. For, if God's truth is meant for all men through the whole of time, his Vicar on Earth must

be assisted in its promulgation and defence by the Spirit of God. Either that, or Christ intended that his Church should be consigned to chaos; which is manifestly absurd. How, then, could the Pope go wrong in *Humanae Vitae*? The very notion is preposterous and the efforts of so many Catholics at the time to show that he could bore witness primarily to the extent to which they had lost contact with the supernatural. For, they pitched the debate at the level of reason alone. This was their basic and tragic mistake. They never took into account the supernatural guidance bound to be received by the Holy Father, particularly under the circumstances which surrounded the publication of the Encyclical. The endeavour of those who confronted the Pope over *Humanae Vitae* was, of course, to make the Holy Father like themselves and defeat him on their chosen ground of unaided reason alone. But this is precisely what the Holy Father's position, combined with the nature of the occasion, made it quite impossible for them to do. Thus, the debate they manufactured round the question of *Humanae Vitae* became totally unreal—bogus from start to finish. What they failed to see in their unthinking arrogance was that, in this country for example, the debate resolved itself into a choice between Norman St. John Stevas on the one hand and the Holy Spirit on the other. I am sure Stevas himself will agree that there is no ground for comparison here; for any right-minded Catholic the choice of the Holy Spirit must be seen as inevitable. Those who chose otherwise at the time bore witness not to the rightness of St. John Stevas and his friends, but to their own wrong-headedness.

The point need be laboured no further. Supernatural wisdom must be preferred to natural ratiocination, however cleverly presented. Mere human wisdom cannot surpass that which is divinely assisted. It is of value in its service; never happy when pitched against it. It is this that St. John Stevas and so many like him failed utterly to grasp at the time. At base, they were unable to see that the struggle over *Humanae Vitae* was essentially one of reason against God.

## Adam and Eve and Rebel Priests

It was, of course, the same with the Angels who fell and the same when Adam and Eve put themselves out of Paradise. The temptation was to make themselves like God by denying their dependence on him; to do away with what was presented to them as the unreasonableness, the irrationality of supernatural imposition with its command that they should do this and that. They were urged to assert themselves and thwart, thereby, the absurdity of being bound by what they did not understand. If you dispense with the absurdity of the command (not to eat of the fruit of the tree of life) by breaking it, you will make yourselves exactly like God, the equal of him by defying his irrational (because supernatural) command and getting away with it. By so doing, you will prove you owe nothing to God. So Adam and Eve were told. This was the essence of their temptation. They were the first on earth who sought to make the world in their image instead of reverencing in it the likeness of God. Men have suffered for their sin ever since. Adam and Eve have had plenty of followers. In this context, it is not without significance that the fifty-two rebel priests who wrote publicly against the Pope in the *Times* were very quick in their letter to place the Holy Father on a par with themselves, speaking of his personal judgment on the matter of birth control as if to imply that it were worth no more than their own. They, too, missed the point—or were careful to avoid raising it—that this could never be the case; that Pope Paul's judgment on this occasion, though personal in the sense that it belonged to himself, could not be personal in the sense that it represented no more than himself. It was essentially something prompted and to that extent shared by the Spirit of God. Pope Paul's office and the solemnity of the occasion on which he spoke dictated that it must be. Either this or, really, one need no longer believe in the Church. There can be no half-way house here. To know the Church, after all, is to know it as divine; as founded by God and assisted by His Spirit; outside the categories therefore of purely human reasoning. Which does not mean that the Church is

unreasonable; only that unaided human reason cannot have the last say in its affairs.

### Reason versus Authority

We are brought to the point that the turmoil in the Church which brought itself into focus around *Humanae Vitae* represented no more than a modern manifestation of a very old challenge, which is that of reason (unassisted by grace) against authority (enlightened and supported by the Spirit of God). We are back at the philosophy of the enlightenment which rejected the supernatural, made reason sovereign, denounced the authority of the Church and persecuted it as a purveyor of irrational dogma which was used to cloud what should be the untrammelled workings of the human mind. If reason was sovereign—as the men of the nineteenth century thought it was—then authority was out, except where accepted by reason; and truth became no more than a relative thing, the creature of sovereign reason and no more. There was but one absolute for the men of the nineteenth century and that was the human mind. Truth was what each made it and authority invalid except where sanctioned by a majority of reasoning minds. Our own day has seen the wreckage of the hopes engendered by this false philosophy. It is the more tragic, in consequence, to find it now with a foothold in the Church, where the talk among progressives is of a type of structural reform, by which they mean that the Church should be “democratized” with a view to authority within it gaining validity only through the consent of a majority of the governed. Here, once again, is the old story of human reason set against divinely-given authority and truth made the creature of majority vote. One of the main objections raised against *Humanae Vitae* was that, in pronouncing as he did, the Holy Father had a majority of his Commission against him. Worse still, in its ignorance, was the comment of, if I remember rightly, Douglas Brown in the *Sunday Telegraph* to the effect that those who believed that authoritative pronouncement in the Church should reflect the mind of its members had now had their hopes dashed. Again, the same error; that truth should

reflect a consensus; that it is something formed by men, not given to them. On the contrary, consensus should be built round truth, which must be there and proclaimed by authority in the first place in order that consensus may be built about it.

## **Authority and the Holy Spirit**

Let us be quite clear on this point. If God's truth is for the men of all time, two things are essential. There must be authority appointed by him over the Church to protect and proclaim that truth and that authority must be preserved from error by the Holy Spirit in matters concerning that truth. In other words, if the Church is of God—if its business is to hand God's truth to men—it must be governed by hierarchic authority. Either this, or the anarchy of the sects, with every man his own pope. This is precisely what the present dispute is about. It can be resolved in only one way. We can say this with certainty, for we know that the Holy Spirit is with the Church and we have Christ Our Lord's word that the gates of Hell will not prevail against it.

## **Heresy and Truth**

There have been times these past months when I have wished that the great Chesterton were alive, that he might give us all the benefit of his immense wisdom and turn his superb debating powers against the mean little men in our midst who are so busy these days nagging in public and private at the Church of God. There is a brilliant observation of his that comes to mind as I write these words. It is that every heresy, on examination, usually reveals itself as an exaggeration to absurdity of a particle of truth. Thus, today, those who would subject authority in the Church to the rule of human reason are carrying to the absurdity of outrageous exaggeration the truth that authority should be reasonably exercised; with respect, that is, for the dignity of the Christian as a human being made in the image of God. Very often, in the past, this has not been the case and it

may well be no coincidence that, in two countries where the present turmoil is at its worst, authority within the Church has often been wielded with a heavy and, sometimes, totally unreasonable hand. The Dutch have been appalling at times in this regard and the Americans have often been as bad. Now, the near-ferocity which sometimes accompanied the injunctions of ecclesiastical superiors in those two countries appears to have been imparted to those in revolt against them. The revolt is as fierce and unthinking as the rule of authority once was. Apart from this, however, there can be no doubt but that, in the past, authority was often mishandled, particularly in the lower echelons of the Church's hierarchical structure and that the same was the case within religious orders where obedience was used as a shield, at times, to cover the incompetence of superiors.

### **Futility of Gimmicks**

But the remedy here is not to abolish authority or to make its effective working virtually impossible through the over-stratification of Church structures; like that rather absurd organization of priests which is being built on near-trade-union lines within the American Church. Neither is it to be found in gimmicks; as in the case of Reverend Mothers who drop the "Reverend" and even the "Mother", become plain "Sister" and remain as frosty-hearted as before. The same applies to rectors and parish priests who surround themselves with committees, which they then proceed to use as new instruments of a very old authoritarianism, which remains as deep-set in their hearts as ever before.

### **Authority and Authoritarianism**

Authority is one thing and authoritarianism quite another. If there has been too much of the latter in the Church that, in itself, gives no reason whatever for seeking to abolish the former. What is needed so much in the Church today is not only the realization that authority be humanised, but that this cannot be done at base through changing structures or the introduction of gimmicks into ecclesiastical and religious life. The process has to be essentially one of changing people rather than structures, producing superiors

who are conscious of the human dignity of their subjects; at ease with them, therefore, yet sure of themselves and their authority which is built round effective policy. Religious life in particular is suffering today in the Church because too many superiors have lost or surrendered their authority. Having handled it wrongly in the past, they have made the mistake now of whittling it to almost nothing in the mistaken view that this is what is now called for. Subjects, in consequence, have lost their sense of security. As a result, some are victimized by a sense of personal inadequacy which always comes with weak rule: they curl up within themselves and do relatively little. Others become still more *outré* in a rather childish endeavour to bear witness to their individuality and draw attention to themselves: here, as everywhere else, the permissive appetite grows by what it feeds on. Either way, the waste of energy is appalling.

### The Need for Men

In the past, blind rule by authoritarian superiors killed the spirit of many admirable men and women in the religious orders of the Church. In the present, weak rule by permissive superiors produces, in its own way, more or less the same effect. The right mean will be struck when emphasis is laid on men rather than measures as the only way to the true renewal of religious life. It would be wrong to think that we shall not have to wait quite some time for this. Meanwhile, a great deal that goes on—the talk, the gimmicks, the attempts at structural reform—is best seen as the expression of a very understandable and, no doubt, subconscious desire to avoid the intensive and prayer-filled effort necessary to find the right men to hold positions of responsibility in ecclesiastical and religious life. Until that day comes, we must expect a growing dearth of vocations. In the end, please God, the sanctions of greatly decreasing numbers of priests and religious will bring to the forefront of men's minds in the Church the realization that the only men and women fit to hold authority within it are those whose first concern is for the dignity of their brothers and sisters under God.

The remote frontiers of China and Russia have been the battleground for over 4,000 armed clashes of varying severity over the years. Why has this moment been chosen by both sides to bring these conflicts to the attention of the world? Does it mean war? Or is it for political purposes?

## The Sino-Soviet Clash

E. L. WAY

ON the day my March article in *Christian Order* was published, the news that fighting between Chinese and Russian frontier guards near Chenpao had broken out was announced. I wrote in the March issue: "Was the action in Czechoslovakia an attempt to consolidate the Eastern bloc so that the Russians can face up to the final and dreaded clash with China? There have been many armed clashes on the long Sino-Soviet border. Pressure of a military nature has been building up there for a long time." This does not mean that a war between the two countries is likely in the near future. (Those experts who study political omens think that that event is more likely to take place in the last quarter of this century.) Preparations for such a fearful clash will take a long time.

The timing of the incident of Sunday 2 March was favourable to the Chinese. The Russians were involved in the Berlin crisis, with deft and intricate negotiations with the new Nixon administration, and with the critical situation in the Middle East. The ninth Congress of Chinese Communists is also shortly to be held; and in May there is to be a world conference of Communist parties in Moscow. The moment appeared right and the evidence shows that a bloody battle took place. The Chinese said "large numbers of fully armed soldiers", with four armoured vehicles and cars, were "the first to open cannon and gun fire, killing and wounding

many Chinese frontier guards." The Russians claimed that Chinese troops crossed the frontier and opened fire on their border guards. The clash occurred where the Ussuri and Amur rivers divide the Soviet's Eastern Maritime Province from Heilungkiang, the Chinese Northeastern Province.

### *Origins of the Dispute*

The Sino-Soviet frontier stretches 7,000 miles from the eastern border of Soviet Tadzhikistan (north of Afghanistan — the Chinese road building which featured in the news before the clash with India was aimed at the Soviet frontier) along the borders of Sinkiang and Mongolia through to Manchuria. I remember reading, I think about six years ago, that 1,000 armed clashes, involving tanks, had occurred between the two countries. The Russians now claim that 4,000 such incidents have taken place; and the Chinese that in the last two years the Russians have invaded their territory 16 times and have violated their air space 131 times.

The origin of the dispute was summarized by Mao Tse-tung, with unusual brevity for him, in a statement he made to a Japanese delegation in 1964: "About a hundred years ago," he said, "the area to the East of Lake Baikal became Russian territory. . . Vladivostok, Khabarovsk, Kamchatka, and other areas have become Soviet territory. We have not yet presented our account for this list." The Russian government from time to time reminds its people that these far eastern territories "created by the hands of our forefathers, and covered by the sweat and blood of our people", are coveted by the Chinese. The area north and east of the rivers Amur and Ussuri were legally acquired by the Russians in the treaties of 1858 (Treaty of Aigun) and 1860 (Treaty of Peking). And the Chinese regard these treaties as having been forced upon them by the imperialist Tzars.

The Russians cannot admit these claims because they would (1) challenge the position of the Soviet Union as a Pacific power (2) threaten the trans-Siberian railway and (3) endanger the vital port of Vladivostok.

### *Balance of Forces*

Both countries have reinforced their key garrisons along the frontier, especially where defence industries are located. Russia has taken over the defence of 'independent' Outer Mongolia and has missile sites which could launch devastation on Peking. She also has 320,000 troops stretched along the common frontier. And they are crack troops. The Chinese are believed to have 500,000 troops facing the Russians. And the Russians have a vastly superior air force.

Sinkiang, at the western end of the frontier, is not ethnically Chinese. The inhabitants are Turkic-speaking and are made up of Uighurs, Kazakhs, Khirghiz, Mongols, White Russians, Tatars, Uzbeks and Manchus. The population has been subjected to much Russian propaganda of recent months urging them to be ill disposed to their rulers; and the Chinese have retaliated by suggesting the same course to those across the frontier. On both sides the inhabitants have revolted against their masters. Sinkiang has within its borders most of China's important nuclear installations, and it is believed that it is defended by seven Chinese divisions. It is in this province that Russia would probably cause most trouble to the Chinese. The 2,000-mile frontier could easily be infiltrated.

### *Chinese Weakness*

It is argued that China is too weak and exposed to take any serious military action against Russia. But this alleged weakness did not prevent Chinese action in Korea. The superior strength of the Russians in their far eastern provinces might not deter the Chinese, and once major operations began anywhere on the immensely long frontier there is no telling how or where they could be stopped. In any case perhaps due to the nuclear deterrent major wars are not the order of the day.

The contained, limited war as fought first in Korea and then in Vietnam with major powers not fully involved may still promise to fulfil the demands of either side. And this in spite of the fact that both in Korea and in Vietnam the only likelihood seems to be a festering stalemate. But such

a limited war fought between China and Russia would not necessarily be fought along the lines of the Vietnam affair. Already the Russians claim, with what truth is not known, that the Chinese have committed "a new atrocity" against the people of Sinkiang. It is claimed that they (the Chinese) "fired on a peaceful demonstration near Kuldja City in Sinkiang, killing some 4,000 common people." The statement went on to remind the people that this was not the first time that the Maoists had "covered their hands in the blood of old men, children, and women" who were shot down by machine-guns during a demonstration. A Vietnam affair on the Sino-Soviet frontier would not be covered by western television reporters and newspaper correspondents. It would, so far as the west was concerned, be a secret extermination of whole races. All that can be known of such far-off eventualities is that there have been reports of a Chinese military build-up in Inner Mongolia.

### *Seeking Allies*

— "An enemy of my enemy is my friend", as the saying goes. And so one is not surprised to hear that the Russians have been seeking friends in the most unlikely places. Contacts have been made with, of all people, Chiang Kai-shek, who waged intermittent war against the communists under the slogan of 'Extermination of Bandits' in the 1920s, 1930s and 1940s. (His armies were finally defeated on the mainland by Mao Tse-tung in 1950, but Chiang had fled to Formosa with half a million troops in 1949.)

The visit to India of the Soviet Defence Minister, Marshal A. Grechko, in early March is a further step in the search for allies. Should there be a military confrontation (nations these days fight without going to war), between China and Russia the use of the Indian Air Force forward airbases would be useful. They are nearer Chinese military installations in southern China and Tibet than are the Soviet bases in Siberia. Marshal Grechko visited the IAF base at Chandigarh in northern India and watched Indian pilots fly their Soviet built MIGs. He also visited a plant at Nasik, near Bombay, where air-frames of the MIGs are assembled. But

India wants replacements for its now ancient Hunters and Canberras, and Mysteres. Russia is certainly interested in the *defence* of India but is even more interested in the possible use of her airbases from which she could launch attacks on China, should the necessity arise.

It is not often remembered that Russia has a large Moslem population in her territories. This fact accounts for her pro-Arab attitude in the Middle East. In her approach to India she must carefully avoid any taking of sides in the Pakistan Indian struggle. Pakistan shows signs of breaking up. With Marshal Ayub on his way out, the Bengalis of East Pakistan beginning to shake the weak limbs of the country, and many a Baluchi, Pathan, and Sindi wanting more autonomy in his area of West Pakistan, it would seem that the Chinese would turn their attention to the eastern province while Russia supported West Pakistan. Russia would be most reluctant to supply India with aircraft that could destroy the bases in West Pakistan which have been removed as far as possible from India to the Pakistani-Iranian border.

The Russians are certainly ready to make live-and-let-live agreements with the west and above all with the United States. President Nixon, who once made a great reputation as an anti-Communist, recently gave the American people one of the clearest pictures of the worldwide diplomatic problems facing the Soviet Union. In doing this he has made possible an eventual understanding between the two nations. He did not in any way excuse certain Russian actions — such as the invasion of Czechoslovakia or the arming of North Vietnam — but he did point out that Russia was not a completely free agent. He spoke understandingly of the Russians desire to take no action which would put them in a disadvantageous position in their quarrel with China. The Russians have in fact tried to solve the Middle East situation while procuring as favourable terms as possible for their Arab friends. This does not mean that the Soviet Union has forsaken its Communist ideology, but it does mean that it is beginning to see that ideology is, like patriotism, not enough. It must face facts.

## *Conclusions*

There may be no war because, in the Western view, a large scale conflict between Russia and China is ruled out on the grounds that the border regions are much too remote and the logistic problems of supporting large units are too great. It has also to be borne in mind that China has made frontier claims on a number of states and has come to agreements with Burma, Pakistan, Mongolia, and Afghanistan without fighting and with commendable speed. The ground ceded to these countries by 'unjust' treaties was written off by the Chinese. There are also political considerations why much has been made of the Sino-Soviet clashes of 2 March and 14 and 15 March. The ninth Congress of Chinese Communists is to be held in May, and at that time there is a world conference of Communist parties in Moscow. Each side will seek to show the other in the worst possible light. The Chinese have also not yet developed their nuclear capacity to the extent that they could devastate Russian cities within a range of 3,000 miles. Within a year they could perhaps achieve this goal, and then the fighting would have to depend on conventional forces. The Russians may be forced into a pre-emptive strike against the Chinese nuclear installations in Sinkiang, said to be located in the region of Lop Nor.

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# You and Your Work

J. F. McDONALD

## *Introduction*

The aim of this article is to outline the teaching of the Second Vatican Council on work as it affects the life of the Christian. Most of us are engaged either in manual work, intellectual work, or a mixture of both. This being so, we should know what is the proper attitude of the Christian towards his work, if it is to play its part in the renewal spoken of by the Council.

The principal documents dealing with the subject are the Dogmatic Constitution On The Church, the Pastoral Constitution On The Church In The World of Today and the Decree On The Apostolate Of The Laity. These documents are referred to in the text by the letters DC, CW, and AL respectively.

Human labour can be considered as a human and personal activity involving the individual and society, or as an economic factor affecting the economy. We will treat of each of these aspects.

## *Work as a Human and Personal Activity*

Under this head the Council speaks of human labour as enabling man to :

- 1) offer spiritual sacrifices to God;
- 2) exercise charity to the full and associate himself with the redemptive work of Christ;
- 3) play his part in perfecting the divine creation;
- 4) achieve greater holiness;
- 5) fulfil himself as a person.

## *I. A Spiritual Sacrifice*

Because our daily work is a spiritual sacrifice to be offered to God along with the sacrifice of Christ himself, it needs to be as perfect as possible.

This aspect of work is bound up with the Council teaching

on the priesthood of the laity. Although there is an essential difference between the priesthood of the laity and the ministerial priesthood, the ordained ministers of the Church and the members of the laity both share in their own way in the single priesthood of Christ.

The Council tells us that "Christ the Lord, the High Priest chosen from among men (cf Heb 5: 1-5) has made the new people 'a kingdom, priests to his God and Father' (Apoc 1:6; cf. 5:9-10). Through their re-birth and the Holy Spirit's anointing the baptized receive consecration as a spiritual house, a holy priesthood. It is their task in every employment to offer the spiritual sacrifices of a Christian man." (DC n. 10). The Christian thus shares in the life and prerogatives of Christ, especially his priesthood. He receives from Christ, the Eternal High Priest, the power to transform his actions into spiritual worship. This enables him to make all his actions sacred; to make his life and all his activities an act of worship. This makes it possible for him to give a religious dimension to the whole of his life and to associate himself with the divine praise which Christ offers to the Father with his sacrifice.

This intense life of worship given by man can only be lived in union with Christ and his sacrifice still present in the Church today especially in the Eucharist. By definition the Eucharist is *the* act of thanksgiving. It is also an act of infinite praise. When man associates himself with the Eucharist totally, that is, with the whole of his being and activity, he becomes part of that hymn of infinite praise which goes up from the man God to the Father. God asks for this total worship from man throughout the whole of his life not to gain any advantage for himself but because he loves us and knows that in this way we can achieve our total good and complete happiness.

The priesthood of its very nature involves the capacity of offering to God sacrifices which bring praise to God and salvation to man. Christ alone is in a position to offer a sacrifice that is acceptable to God; a sacrifice which is of infinite value because it is the sacrifice of himself. He shares this priestly power with those who are incorporated with

him. He gives the laity a share 'in his priestly office for the performance of spiritual worship, so that God may have glory, and man salvation' (DC n. 34).

Every Christian is in a certain measure given the capacity to associate himself with the sacrifice of Christ himself. But to be perfect this act of the Christian must be joined to the priestly act of Christ which is exercised chiefly in the Eucharist.

This is the background against which the Council reminds the laity that "all their activity is turned into spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ (cf. 1 Pet 2:5)", (DC n. 34). Our daily work is among the activities mentioned as coming within the category of spiritual sacrifices which can be offered to God. Furthermore the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy (n. 48) urges the faithful to offer themselves at Mass when they are offering the immaculate victim with and through the priest. The interior act of offering oneself and all one's activities takes on a sacrificial character when it is united with the offering made by the priest.

In the light of this teaching the daily work of the Christian takes on a deep spiritual significance. This in turn should, as we said above, be an added incentive to us to work well so that the sacrifice we offer to God may, on our part, be as perfect as possible.

## II. *Human Labour — a Work of Charity having Redemptive Value*

By speaking of human labour as giving man an opportunity to exercise charity to the full the Council puts it on the highest possible plane. We know too by faith that in offering his work to God man is also associated with the redemptive work of Christ. The work of the redemption is the greatest act of love the world has ever known or will ever know.

Christian baptism incorporates us into Christ so that we can share everything with him and are able to act in his name. Being who he is, everything that Christ did while he was on earth was connected with his great work of redemption. Thus by uniting himself in his work to Christ, whom the

Council puts before us in the historic reality of the worker of Nazareth, the Christian is able to practise real charity, that is, to engage in an activity animated by a supernatural love of God for the benefit of society. The Council reminds workers that by their labour they are associated with the redemptive work of Christ who conferred surpassing dignity on labour by working with his hands at Nazareth (CW n. 67).

One thing the Council has done is to underline the fact that charity is not something passive but a form of service. Time and again throughout the Council documents Christians are exhorted to practice *active* charity. Workers are asked 'to model themselves in active charity on Christ whose hands were once busy with tools and who is always at work with his Father for the saving of all men' (DC n. 41). The Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity has the same idea in mind when it tells us that 'in the ungrudging acceptance of whatever life brings in the way of toil and troubles, he (the layman) can have contact with every human being and further the salvation of the world, thus becoming as Christ was when he suffered (cf. 2 Cor 4 : 10; Col 1 : 24)', (AL n. 16)

The type of service of others the Council has in mind is that which is inspired by faith and causes us to see and serve Christ in our neighbour whoever he may be (cf. CW n. 27; DC n. 41).

Finally the Council reminds us that our work gives us an opportunity to follow the advice St. Paul gave to the Galatians : 'Bear one another's burdens and so fulfil the law of Christ' (Gal 2:6), (DC n. 41).

### III. *Perfecting the Divine Creation*

God in his goodness has left it to man to collaborate with him in the stupendous work of creation by making it possible for him through his daily work to add something of his own which has the effect, in the words of the Council, of 'perfecting the divine creation' and 'improving the condition of creation' as well as the whole of society (cf. CW n. 67; DC n. 41). In this respect the changes brought about by man are to be seen in many fields of human activity. To the

ordinary person, however, they are more striking and wonderful in the world of plants and flowers. Man's daily occupations also enable him to exercise that control over the works of creation which God gave him at the first moment of his existence.

#### IV. *A Means of Holiness*

It should be clear from what has already been said that the daily work of the Christian plays an important part in helping him to achieve personal holiness. But the Council deals specifically with this point when it states: "the duty of the laity, which springs from their own vocation, is to seek the kingdom of God in the transaction of worldly business and the godly arrangement they give it" (DC n. 31).

More than once the Council insists that as Christians we don't strive after holiness for our own selfish ends. We must share our blessings and graces with others and help them to become more holy as well as ourselves. We are told very clearly that "the laity must help each other to greater holiness of life by means of their secular occupations" (DC n. 36). The Council points out that the laity live their lives in the world. "It is lived in each and all of the world's occupations and employments and in the ordinary situations of the life of the family and society. This is the context of their existence. This is where they have their call from God to make their contribution to the sanctification of the world from the inside, as a leaven, by tackling their job with the spirit of the Gospel as their guide. This is the way in which Christ is principally to be shown to others, by their life's witness, in the glow of their faith, their hope and their charity" (DC n. 31).

The Council shows that, if every Christian were to work in this way, the effect on society as a whole would be overwhelming. The result to be achieved by helping each other to greater holiness of life even by means of their secular occupations is "the drenching of the world in the spirit of Christ, the surer attainment of its goal through justice, charity and peace". Furthermore, the laity "must make vigorous efforts to see that the resources of human labour, technology,

civilization, are deployed in accordance with the Creator's plan and the light shed by his Word. In this case all men without exception will benefit from the cultivation of the goods of creation, these things will be more equitably distributed and will make their own contribution to universal progress in human and Christian freedom. In this way Christ will use the members of his Church to increase the shining of his saving light over the whole of human society" (DC n. 36).

#### V. *Man Fulfils Himself as a Person*

On the merely human level man is never fully a man unless he works. His work enables him to express himself as an individual and as a member of society.

The first thing to note is that human labour is personal in character because it proceeds from a person who puts his seal on the things of nature and submits them to his will (cf. CW n. 67). Work is also personal in so far as it is a projection of the person in the product of his labour.

As an individual man has an obligation to perfect himself. In addition to enabling him to bring about changes in things and in society, man's work helps him to do just this. Through his work man learns much, develops his natural gifts and talents and advances outside and above himself (cf. C.W n. 35). Man's work should also give him an opportunity of developing his sense of responsibility in doing the work itself (CW n. 67).

In the mechanised age in which we live it is not always possible in many jobs for the worker to express himself in his work in the way envisaged by the Council. The Council, however, insists that whenever possible workers should be given scope to express their natural talents and their personality in their work (cf. CW n. 67). In this way the worker certainly achieves greater human perfection through his work. Even the progress of a nation depends to some extent on the citizens being given an opportunity to express themselves in their work (cf. CW nn. 36 & 86). So important is this point that, if workers are not given sufficient opportunity of developing themselves in this sense in their work,

the Council teaches that they should make up for the deficiency outside working hours (CW n. 67). Partly with this in view workers are urged to take part in the life of the firm, its interests and its various activities (CW n. 68).

For most people work is a human necessity. It is the means by which a man normally maintains his own life and the lives of those dependent on him (CW n. 67). What is a necessity can often become monotonous but the above considerations so enrich the notion of work as to relieve this monotony and give the worker a real sense of vocation in his daily occupations.

### *The Social Aspect of Work*

Besides being an individual and personal matter work also has a social aspect. As a purely human activity it is a form of service to one's fellow-men (CW n. 67). It is performed in society for the benefit of society and makes an important contribution to human living. Workers should be encouraged by the words of the Council which remind them that "men and women who provide sustenance for themselves and their families in such a way that at the same time they employ their energies for the benefit of society, are justified in thinking that by their own labour they advance the work of the Creator and benefit their fellow-men, and that their personal industry contributes to the carrying out of the divine plan in history" (CW n. 34).

Finally most Christians today, who are conscious of their social obligations, must engage in some kind of work if they are to play their part in bringing about a stable economic development, in bettering the conditions of certain classes of society and in putting an end to the appalling inequalities which exist among too many members of the human family.

### *Economic Aspect of Human Labour*

Human labour is of primary importance in the economic field. Work should be viewed by all the members of a firm as a means of production, the fulfilment of a duty and the giving of a service. Workers should also be able to make their voice heard and to contribute to the efficient running of

the firm. The Council speaks in general terms. It leaves concrete forms of participation to be worked out according to circumstances and conditions of time and place (CW n. 68).

### *An Adequate Wage*

The Council lays down the principle that wages should be such as to make it possible for each one to live a life in keeping with his dignity as a human being according to the circumstances in which he is placed, e.g. as the father of a family. The teaching on this point is more specific than that given in *Mater et Magistra*. The encyclical of Pope John XXIII states that "workers must be paid wages which allows them to live a truly human life and to fulfil their family obligations in a worthy manner" (n. 71). For the worker the Council envisages a higher standard of living which embraces something more than his material needs. In this connection it states that "wages must be paid which will give adequate scope for living materially, socially, culturally and spiritually considering each one's job, his productivity, his working conditions and the general welfare" (CW n. 67).

In practice many factors have to be taken into account in applying the above principle. The state of the business must be looked into in addition to the type of work done and the productivity of each worker.

Reference is made to the teaching of *Quadragesimo Anno* where two other principles are laid down, namely, that the workers should in some measure be given a share of the profits and that it is unjust to demand a wage which the firm cannot possibly pay. Wages can also have an important effect on the economy of a country. For this reason the common good of the particular country must always be considered when deciding on a wages policy. The ideal is to keep the cost of living at a level which will give to all a reasonable standard of living. Salaries which are too high on the one hand, or too low on the other, can affect the economy adversely (CW n. 67).

### *Foreign Workers*

Since there are so many foreign workers employed in this country, it is well to recall what the Council has to say about their difficulties in this context. The Council states that "it is also a fact that mobility of labour so absolutely necessary in a developing economy, should be regulated so as not to make the lives of men and their families uncertain or insecure. There should be no discrimination in working conditions or pay against foreign workers who co-operate in furthering the economy. All, especially public authorities, should regard them not as mere tools of production but as persons, help them to send for and decently house their families, and encourage them to become part of the social life of the country" (CW n. 66). The Council does, however, point out that as far as possible opportunities of work should be created in the countries to which they belong (*ibid*).

### *Sufficient Employment*

It is recognised that man has a right to work — a right which is to be exercised according to each one's ability. Society, in its turn, has a correlative duty to provide adequate opportunities for work. This is done indirectly by implementing a sound programme for developing the economy and making it stable. The community as a whole should endeavour to establish an effective economic development according to the circumstances in which it finds itself. This duty is more pressing in those areas where there are vast numbers of unemployed and where there is a low level of economic development (CW nn. 66 & 67).

### *Industrial Relations*

Without going into details the Council merely outlines the relations which should exist between workers and management. It will be sufficient for our purpose to give the relevant passage dealing with this question.

"In economic enterprises it is persons who work together, that is, free and independent men created in God's image. So long as unity of direction is assured, a suitable share in management should be aimed at for everybody—proprietors,

employers, management and workers. But since economic and social conditions, and hence the future of workers and their children, often depend not on the firm they work for but on higher-level institutions, workers should have a share in these too, either directly or through their freely-elected delegates."

"One fundamental human right that workers have is that of freely setting up unions which can genuinely represent them and contribute to a proper organizing of economic life; they have also the right to participate freely in union business, without fear of victimization. This kind of orderly participation, combined with progressive economic and social training, will increase everybody's awareness of his position and duties, and make each feel associated according to his capacities and attainments, with the whole work of economic and social progress and with the universal welfare."

"When social-economic conflict arises the aim should be to settle it peacefully. But though negotiation should come first, strikes can remain a necessary last resort, in present conditions, for protecting rights and realising the rightful demands of labour. As soon as possible, however, ways and means should be sought to resume negotiations and bring about reconciliation" (CW n. 68).

### *The Responsibility of the Faith*

All that has already been said should serve to reinforce the appeal made by the Council to Christians "citizens of both cities (the earthly and the heavenly), to spare no pains to carry out their earthly duties faithfully and in the spirit of the gospel." "They are wide of the mark," the Council continues, "who think that because here we have no lasting city but seek the city that is to come, they can neglect their duty here on earth: they forget that the faith increases their obligations to fulfil these duties in accordance with their vocation. On the other hand equally wrong are those who think that they can immerse themselves completely in this world's business, as though this were something quite unconnected with religion, and religion merely a matter of worship and some moral duties. This breach between faith and

daily life among so many must be considered one of the more serious errors of our time." . . . . "Let there be no false opposition between professional and social activity and the life of religion. The Christian who neglects his temporal duties neglects his duties to his neighbour, neglects God and risks his eternal salvation. Instead Christians should be glad of the chance to exercise their earthly talents after the example of Christ who worked as a carpenter. They must fuse all human effort, domestic, professional, scientific and technical in a vital synthesis with religious values, which co-ordinate everything in the highest way to God's own glory" (CW n. 43).

### *Conclusion*

It should be abundantly clear from what has been said that for the Christian his work is much more than an unavoidable necessity, a necessary means to a very necessary end, namely, his pay packet at the end of the week or month as the case may be. To take such a narrow view of work would be to rob it of the deep supernatural and religious and social significance which emerges from the brief outline given above.

The teaching of the Council is directed especially at those who are single and who seem to themselves to live humdrum lives. They may often find their work hard and uninteresting and may have a sense of frustration in their lives. After speaking of those who are called to the married state the Council addresses itself to widows and the single people we have already described. In effect the Council asks them to raise their spirits by considering their ultimate goal in life and to put before themselves the higher considerations connected with their work. They should look upon their work as giving them an opportunity of perfecting themselves, of helping their fellow-citizens, of contributing to the general progress, of carrying out an apostolate by means of their work itself. In the words of the Council "their hope must make them joyful. They must shoulder each other's burdens and use their daily work to rise to greater heights of holiness, the holiness of an apostolate" (DC n. 41).

In this article Dr. Jackson explains the basic plan for pensions : what a pensioner would get if he were earning £11, £15, £19, £23, or £27. He does not think that the present rates are sufficient to maintain indefinitely the proposed benefits. And he also asks whether the scheme presents good value for money.

## New Look for Pensions

J. M. JACKSON

THE Government's White Paper on pensions and social security benefits has not attracted anything like the attention which has been given to the one on industrial relations. This is not surprising. Although it will involve substantially increased contributions for most people, the starting date proposed is 1972. It does not, therefore, carry the same immediate impact as the proposal to impose penalties, in certain circumstances on unofficial strikers. Moreover, the expected comprehensive review of social security has not materialised. There is the hint of short-term income related benefits for sickness and unemployment, presumably on a more generous basis than the present income related supplement payable for six months, and also a longer term income related sickness benefit scheme. This latter scheme will presumably give some increase in benefit over the present flat rate scheme. But no details are given. We are also told that there is a proposal to give some help to severely disabled housewives, who are outside the scope of the present National Insurance scheme. Again, there is nothing to indicate how much help will be given, though the indications are that it will be inadequate.\* Nor have

\* The indications are that help will be given to those housewives who are so severely disabled that they need constant attendance. In this case, it seems unlikely that the benefit will be any greater than that given as an *extra benefit* over and above a basic benefit greater than the normal sickness benefit to those disabled at work. This extra benefit may be enough to enable a wife to obtain occasional help to stay with her disabled husband while she goes out. It will not be enough to enable a husband to hire help all day in the home while he is out at work. Such help may be needed, even where the housewife is not so seriously disabled that she cannot be left alone.

proposals materialised for helping fatherless families (other than those where the mother is a widow).

### *The Basic Plan for Pensions*

The basic plan for pensions is simple. If the scheme were in operation at the moment, a pensioner whose life average earnings had been £11 a week would get a pension of £6-12s. or 60 per cent of his average earnings. Below £11 a week, he will get 60 per cent of average earnings, subject to a proviso that he would not get less than the present flat rate of £4-10s. a week. In addition, he will get, if earning more than £11 a week, 25 per cent of the excess of earnings over that figure but below £33 a week. So a man earning £22 a week would get :

25 per cent of £11, which is   £2-15s.

60 per cent of £11, which is   £6-12s.

Total	<hr/> £9 - 7s. <hr/>
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A man earning £33, the maximum level taken into account, he would get :

25 per cent of £22, which is   £5-10s.

60 per cent of £11, which is   £6-12s.

Total	<hr/> £12 - 2s. <hr/>
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These rates are for a single person. A married man whose wife is not entitled to a pension by virtue of her own contributions, will get an additional allowance of £2-16s., as at present. If the woman has a right to a pension in her own right, she will be given the better of (a) 60 per cent of her life average earnings up to £11 a week plus 25 per cent of her life average earnings between £11 and £33 i.e. the same formula as the single person, or (b) £2-16s. plus 25 per cent of her life average earnings.\* A woman will, therefore,

\* Life average earnings will be calculated from age 19 to age 60 (women) or 65 (men). Until the time comes when those retiring would have been able to contribute to the scheme at the age of 19 (i.e. around the year 2013 for women), the calculation will be made over the period of operation of the scheme. Although a woman may have average earnings of £11 a week while at work, if she works for only 20 years out of a working lifetime assumed to be 41 years, her life average earnings will be taken as a little under £5-10s. and this will entitle her to a pension of £3-6s.

always get some benefit from the contributions which she has paid: the amount added to the joint pension will always be more than the allowance for a dependent wife with no entitlement in her own right.

### *Pensions and Subsistence*

One of the first questions to be answered is whether the new pensions will give pensioners an adequate income and enable them to live without recourse to Supplementary Benefits. At the moment, the Supplementary Benefit scale allows a married couple £7-19s. plus rent. It will not be overgenerous, therefore, if we say that a married couple in retirement need at least £9-10s. to live in reasonable comfort. The examples below show the pension received by a couple where a man's life average earnings are £11, £15, £19, £23 and £27 a week. In each case, it is assumed that the wife is not entitled to a pension in her own right. I also show the proportion of life average earnings received as pension.

Life Average Earnings	Pension	Pension as percentage of Life Average Earnings
£11	£9-8s.	85
£15	£10-8s.	69
£19	£11-8s.	60
£23	£12-8s.	54
£27	£13-8s.	50

Even the man earning as little as £11 a week, about half the national average, would therefore be above the Supplementary Benefit scale. A man earning £23 a week, a little above the national average, would get a pension equal to 54 per cent of his normal earnings.

This seems reasonably satisfactory. The pension schemes for many white collar workers, however, aim at a pension equivalent to about two thirds of *final* salary. Not only is this greater than the proportionate pension provided for workers under the government scheme, except at comparatively low earnings levels, there is also the important distinc-

tion between final salary and life average earnings. In all cases, final salary is likely to be substantially higher than life average earnings. Most workers take a little time to reach their maximum earnings. For manual workers, the peak may come early, but it also begins to decline comparatively early.\*

### *The Transitional Period*

It will be quite a long time before the new scheme really does much to alter the levels of pensions. The scheme only comes into full operation for benefits in 1992, twenty years after its introduction. Until then, people retiring will receive a mixture of pensions under the old and new schemes. Thus we can see what will happen in the case of a man or woman retiring in 1973, having contributed to the new scheme for one year. Let us say this person's life average earnings are £23 a week (i.e. he earned £23 a week during the year 1972/73). The full pension under the new scheme would be £9-12s. but he will receive only one-twentieth of this plus nineteen-twentieths of the present flat rate pension of £4-10s. (The allowance for a dependent wife with no entitlement is the same under both schemes.) He will therefore get 9s. 6d. plus £4-5s. 6d., a total of £4-15s. or 5s. more than under the existing scheme. Somebody retiring after five years will get five-twentieths of the new pension plus fifteen-twentieths of the old, and so on. Thus every year of contribution to the new scheme improves the flat rate pension by roughly 5s. a week. We have been looking at a man whose earnings are about the national average. It will be about 1981 before such a man will retire on a pension that gives him roughly what he is entitled to receive in Supplementary Benefit.

### *Value for Money ?*

Many people will be inclined to ask whether the scheme represents good value for money or not. This is not an easy question to answer. A simple comparison with a typical

\* In many white collar jobs, there is no decline, and earnings may even rise to the end of a man's working life. (In all this discussion, it is assumed that general wage and price levels are constant. With inflation, all wages and salaries will rise, but we are not concerned with the general trend, only with those increases resulting from promotion or greater efficiency.)

private pension scheme is not appropriate. The scheme is on a completely different basis from any private pension scheme. The government scheme is admitted to be 'pay as you go'. In a private pension scheme, enough money has to be accumulated to permit the accumulated liabilities to be met, regardless of whether further contributions are received or not. The government, on the other hand, can always rely upon being able to use its power of taxation to obtain the money required to pay pensions and does not need to build up a fund. Of course, a future government may always decide that the burden of contributions or taxation required at a future date to meet the cost of the promised pensions would be politically unacceptable, and decide therefore that the obligations could not be met. There is, therefore, no guarantee that the new pensions will, in fact, be paid in twenty or thirty or forty years' time.

In the early years of the scheme, the scale of contributions ( $12\frac{1}{2}$  per cent of earnings up to £33 will be shared between employer and worker, and  $9\frac{1}{4}$  per cent is allocated to pensions and the rest to other benefits) will be the same as that which is to be maintained throughout the operation of the scheme. On the other hand, although it is a 'pay as you go' scheme, initially the pensions being paid will be calculated predominantly on the present flat-rate basis, and outgoings will be relatively small. It is estimated that for about fourteen years the scheme will have a surplus and a fund will be built up equal to about a year's income. The government's own estimate is that in the fifteenth year, outgoings will exceed income. This is without making any allowance for continuing inflation. My own estimate is that a 3 per cent annual inflation of prices and incomes will not bring the deficit forward in time, but the deficits increase very rapidly in size once inflation is assumed. The chances are, therefore, that before the end of the transitional period, the scheme will be in serious trouble. In other words, *the present rates of contribution are not sufficient to maintain indefinitely the proposed benefits.*

Let us look at the position of a man earning £1,000 a year. Under this scheme, he is paying £92 in pension contributions

(including the employer's contributions). Over a period of twenty years, he would pay a total of £1,840. Together with interest earned on accumulated funds during the twenty year period, this would amount to a total of something like £2,800 with which to purchase an annuity on retirement. With this he could purchase an annuity of rather less than £300. But even the 60 per cent pension on the first £11 of earnings would give him £345. If, however, we consider a young man entering the new scheme at 20, and contributing for 45 years, he will pay contributions totalling nearly £3,200, which would be increased to something like £6,500 by interest. This would enable him to get an annuity of about £690 a year. Under the new state scheme, his pension will be only £450 if he is single and £595 if he is married.

The state scheme, therefore, looks a bad buy. One reason is that the pension formula gives lower paid workers a bigger proportionate pension whereas all pay the same proportionate pensions. On the other hand, everybody seems to get a very good immediate return on the extra contributions paid. The lowest paid workers, in fact, will pay less than at present and will get substantially increased pensions—in the fairly remote future. But, we have seen already that the contribution rates may have been fixed too low to keep the scheme solvent once the transitional period is passed.

### *Present Pensioners*

The scheme offers nothing for those already retired or retiring before the new scheme starts to operate. The person who retires within a few years of the start of the scheme may get an additional pension which is generous in relation to the amount of extra contributions he has paid, but it will be quite some time before the extra pension is really significant in the sense of bringing pensioners generally above the poverty line.

On the other hand, it is difficult to see what else the government could have done. There is little justification for introducing income related pensions for people who have only made flat-rate contributions. While the person who makes a bigger contribution may rightly expect something extra in pension, even if not fully in proportion to his extra

contributions, there is no reason at all for paying a bigger pension to a man because when working he earned more if he did not contribute more to the pension scheme. Any help to present pensioners could only have come through an increase in the flat-rate pension. The government has now promised regular and automatic reviews of all the benefits, including the flat rate, but this is a separate matter.

An immediate increase in the flat-rate pension might have been introduced when the new scheme starts. Contributions at the start will be vastly in excess of liabilities, in a scheme that is supposed to be 'pay as you go'. This, of course, would mean that the initial surpluses would be much reduced, and the scheme run into deficit at a much earlier date. This would very quickly show up the unsatisfactory nature of the present proposals and force a higher rate of contribution at a much earlier date than will be necessary as things stand.

There are other features of the scheme to which it will be necessary to return in a later article. In particular, there are important changes in the provision for widows, and the 'dynamic' or 'inflation proof' characteristics of the scheme need careful examination.

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**Is the Church's official teaching on original sin being controverted? If so, what is the likely outcome of the controversy? Why, in the parable, is the recipient of one talent condemned? He gave it back untarnished. May a Catholic join the Rosicrucians?**

## Any Questions?

WILLIAM LAWSON, S.J.

**Is the Church's official teaching on original sin being controverted? If so, what is the likely outcome of the controversy?**

What do you mean by "official teaching" and by "controverted"?

If, by "official teaching", you mean what the Church has defined, then there is no controversy in the ordinary meaning of the word as debate on a subject which is open to question. The Church's definitions stand in their plain meaning. There can and should be prayerful study to see more deeply into that meaning; but speculation which starts with the denial of what has been defined is not controversy but heresy, and it has already been condemned.

The doctrine of original sin, defined in the Council of Trent, is that original sin was a personal sin of Adam, and that it has been passed on, by generation, to all mankind as the lack of sanctifying grace, so that all men, apart from their personal sins, are in need of salvation so that they may see God.

That is the traditional teaching of the Church, denied in effect by the Briton Pelagius at the beginning of the fifth century, and now the subject of theological explanations, some of which take too little account of defined doctrine. There are two approaches to the facts about the origin of the human race and its early history. That of the Church is supernatural, the attainment of truth by revelation; that of

science is natural, by the use of reason and scientific method. The two fields of investigation are separate. If both come to full knowledge of truth, their truths will dovetail; but while the search goes on neither must invade the other's field. It is not for the Church to dictate scientific fact, nor for the scientists to define the doctrines of creation and salvation.

**Why, in the parable, is the recipient of one talent condemned? He gave it back untarnished.**

Untarnished — and unused. Talents are not museum pieces, or objects d'art to be kept in glass cases or on a silver-table. Perhaps you have been misled by the use, in the parable, of a commercial metaphor, so that you make excuses for the man who does not want to engage in business. But a talent is not just money—it is any faculty or aptitude. You would not be pleased at an able-bodied man turning up regularly for National Assistance though he could easily find suitable work. His powers were made to be used.

The parable is another form of Our Lord's teaching: "Be you perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect". To do Christ's bidding we have to work steadily at becoming the self of which God gave us the makings. We have life in time and space; and our life enables us to act in all our circumstances. That action is at all levels — physical, intellectual and personal; and it should always be for the benefit of the person in time and eternity. The talents of mind and will should be used to love God and man. Not to use them so would be to despise God's gifts and to scorn his will. It would also be to present ourselves to him undeveloped and stunted, a long way from the perfection we might have attained. The demands for charity in thought, word and act are endless. As we go on meeting those demands we enrich our personality, and we also "minister grace to others, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God".

**May a Catholic join the Rosicrucians?**

I am astonished to hear there are any to be joined — they are supposed to have died out a century and a half ago. If

there are any in existence, they must be a fairly recent revival; and, if they are like the original society, a Catholic certainly can't join them, as they are anti-papal and strongly masonic in their ideas.

They originated in a joke which went wrong. A Lutheran pastor wanted to make fun of the fashion, in the early seventeenth century of abandoning Christianity in favour of fantastic sects that practised alchemy and bogus mysticism. He wrote two books purporting to be the history of Christian Rosenkreutz, a nobleman and a former monk, who was initiated into Arabic knowledge of the occult, and who founded a society which adopted the Rose and the Cross as symbols of Christ's Resurrection and Redemption. The fashion must have been much stronger than the satire, for the books were taken seriously, and many other books were written about the secret society which did not exist. Even highly intelligent men like Descartes and Leibniz were taken in and tried to get in touch with members of the society. Eventually a society in Vienna was started, calling itself the Rosicrucians. All the members were freemasons; and Frederick William II of Prussia was strongly influenced by Rosicrusian ideas.

If your Rosicrucians are respectable — religiously sound, and recommended by their practice of the works of mercy — they would be well advised to adopt a respectable name.

**Why do defenders of the Pope and the encyclical "Humanae Vitae" insist so much on the study with which he prepared to write it? He is not after all a specialist in all the subjects involved?**

The reason for accepting as true the doctrines which the Pope gives to the whole Church is that he is exercising the authority and performing the duty committed to him by Christ. As the Second Vatican Council puts it: "In matters of faith and morals, the bishops speak in the name of Christ, and the faithful are to accept their teaching and adhere to it with a religious assent of soul. This religious submission of will and mind must be shown in a special way to the

authentic teaching authority of the Roman pontiff, even when he is not speaking "ex cathedra". The assent due is an assent of faith, the acceptance of truth on the word of a divinely constituted authority.

Some at least of the insistence on Paul VI's studious preparation of the Encyclical is a response to the charge (which I think would have been better ignored) that the Pope did not know what he was talking about. (Someone said to me, in all seriousness, that he could not see the reasonableness of this encyclical, because he had consulted midwives and social workers, and they disagreed with it.) Sociologists have their valuable contribution to make to our sum of knowledge; but they, and the other specialists, are not authorized to state what man's course should be to eternal life. The Pope was talking about God's law and His Will, about the preservation of human nature and human relations, about salvation. With the present condition of mankind fully and compassionately considered he taught as the successor of St. Peter, responsible to Christ for the whole Church.

I have read recently, in a book on the dissolution of the monasteries, that monks and nuns in Henry VIII's time were "expendable" because at best they were doing no more than good laymen and laywomen. Are they not expendable in these days if they are doing work — teaching, nursing — which good seculars can do just as well?

The first task is to sort out your comparisons. There are three of them: firstly, between laity and religious at the suppression of the monasteries; secondly, between laity and religious in the same profession now; thirdly, between Tudor religious and modern religious. What underlies all three is, I think, a fourth comparison between two states of life in Christianity.

All Christians have a duty to work steadily at attaining their individual perfection. All of them have to practice the virtues of poverty, chastity and obedience. Laity and

religious have different ways of practice — religious practice includes the adoption of the Gospel counsels under vow — but any perfection is personal and unique, and outside comparison. Those religious at the time of the suppression who were genuine Christians were not expendable, for their Christianity recommended the following of Christ in the counsels, which is a permanent part of the Church's witness. That is true, also, of religious in the professions. Given that they are, as they should be, good by professional standards, they perpetuate in the Church a state of life as indispensable as that of marriage or professional dedication.

Good religious were not "expendable" in Henry VIII's reign, nor are they now; but, if we lived under a tyranny, and the tyrant wished to finance his policies out of the spoils of religious houses, would his commissioners, like those of Henry VIII be able to make a case for suppression? It is an interesting, and should be a frightening, speculation.

**If a religious Rule is supposed to be based on charity, what justification is there for the custom forbidding nuns to visit their families? And why does the custom operate only in women's orders?**

All religious Rules are ways of living the full Christian life, which is summed up in the two commandments of charity. Many of them begin by stating those two commandments as the spirit of all that follows.

You will remember that the first of those commandments requires us to love God with our whole being, and that Our Lord said that we must not love family more than we love Him. Allegiance to Christ can demand the sacrifice of some of the benefits of family life — to follow him we may have to lose the company of parents and brethren. But family bonds are not broken; rather they are strengthened. It is in supernatural life only that nature is preserved and fulfilled, and love which is inseparable from love of Christ is stronger than any other kind.

As you say, men religious have never been generally forbidden to visit their families. Women religious have suffered

from the insistence through the centuries on their being enclosed. Enclosure was reasonable when they belonged to contemplative orders; but it was forced on all alike when the women wished to undertake an active apostolate. They were therefore unable to travel except rarely, and only on business of their Order. Now that their movements are not so restricted, they are examining the prohibition of visits to family. If such visits are Christian and religious behaviour for men, they are the same for women. They can be, and usually are, a great blessing to the whole family, one of which women religious and their families have been too long deprived.

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# Book Reviews

## CZECHOSLOVAKIA : THE REASON WHY

**Thoughts on Progress, Peaceful Co-Existence and Intellectual Freedom** by Andrei D. Sakharov; Foreign Affairs Publishing Co. Ltd., 7s 6d; pp. 35.

**Anno Humanitatis** by J. Josten; Foreign Affairs Publishing Co. Ltd., 30s.; pp. 40 (approx.).

In these two publications of the Foreign Affairs Publishing Company you have the reason why the Soviet Union occupied Czechoslovakia last summer and the reaction of the Czechs themselves to that brutal event.

The main reason was fear, that the Czech love of freedom would spread; and the fear was stimulated by the kind of document produced by Andrei Sakharov in Russia before the invasion and given open circulation amongst his friends. Sakharov was forty-seven years old at the time and a member of the Soviet Academy of Sciences since 1953. He had enjoyed a brilliant career as a nuclear physicist and had worked over the years with Igor Tamm, a highly respected senior scientist of the Soviet Union, who was at the same time a persistent signatory of petitions in favour of increased intellectual freedom. When he wrote his protest piece last summer Sakharov was the holder of a Stalin prize and had been decorated with the Order of Lenin. He was in the top flight of his profession and his letter of protest undoubtedly reflected the ideas of a good number of Soviet intellectuals inside his own profession and out of it as well.

What precisely he sought in his essay, for the circulation of which Stalin would certainly have shot him, was at base no more than freedom of thought, of speech and of information. Here, then, in Russia, was another advocate of reform which Brezhnev and a powerful clique amongst his colleagues had the wit to see would bring the whole Soviet system crashing to the ground. They knew that once you liberalise totalitarianism or, better, make the attempt to do so, you set

in train a process which must destroy it : in other words, a liberal totalitarianism is a contradiction in terms. None know this better than the men in the Kremlin. So far as they are concerned, their position and their power depends on their ability to keep freedom in chains in the Soviet Union. They know enough to know now that man is made for freedom and that you can make him live a lie only by force. Lessen the force and the lie must go and, with it, the power and position of those who depend on that lie for a living. Novotony had gone in Czechoslovakia. Here, in Russia, was yet one more indication of the ground-swell that could carry away the power that maintained the Soviet system and those who lived by it as the Czar himself had done a little more than fifty years before. In deference, you might say, of their "right" to live off their fellow men, the Soviet leaders struck at the Czechs.

The manner of their striking and the reaction of the Czechs is depicted magnificently by Josten in his *Anno Humanitatis*. The story is told in photographs, as graphic as any I have ever seen anywhere. Who took them, I do not know, but they are immensely compelling in their revelation, at one and the same time, of the immense pathos of liberty lost and the brutality that crushed it. It would be wise, I think, for schools and youth clubs and like organizations to order a copy of this very fine production and leave it about where it can be picked up and read. The youngsters will understand.

Paul Crane, S.J.

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## OBEDIENCE AND AUTHORITY

**Obedience and the Church** by Karl Rahner, Ferdinand Fromm, Cardinal Suenens, and others; Geoffrey Chapman, 30s; pp. 250.

In the history of mankind, the greatest problem has always been, and is now, that of obedience and authority. It called forth the greatest event in human history, the Incarnation of the Word of God. The problem has to be faced in every

society and every generation; and the answer to it will not be found except in imitation of Christ, Who is the answer.

The root of the problem is in the paradox of human personality — that we ought to possess ourselves fully and also to give ourselves wholly away. We are to be free, yet tied. We are made to be persons — beings whose essential attributes are self-possession, freedom and responsibility; but we are always *made*, and are the property of our Maker— His possession, free only to obey, and answer to Him. A resentment of authority as a denial of our freedom, and a refusal to obey so as to assert our self-possession, are understandable; but they are not natural — rather they are destructive of nature, which loses self-possession and is enslaved. That is what happened to the first human pair, and man goes on repeating the original mistake.

God's answer to disobedience is love. "God so loved the world as to give His only-begotten Son, so that believing in Him we might not perish but might have eternal life." "When we were yet in sin, God loved us." As St. Augustine puts it: "He made us lovable by loving us". From that love of God we are to learn to love Him, and when we love Him we shall find no difficulty in obeying. "If you love me, keep my commandments." Christ spent His whole life on earth, from conception to ascension, in doing His Father's will out of love of the Father. "In the head of the book it is written of me: Behold I come to do thy will." He was obedient even to the death of the cross. It is that obedience in love which we have to learn from Him. Without the following and imitation of Christ we shall not recover the right relationship with God, and the right understanding of obedience and authority.

God's authority, and Christ's authority and obedience, are perfect. In human affairs, even in the Church, authority and obedience are necessary, but they often fall short of their finite perfection. It is the purpose of *Obedience and the Church* to make a detailed analysis of authority and obedience from the Scripture, the Church's tradition, and human nature, to show where, in the present circumstances, that perfection lies, and how to work towards it.

The simple fact is that there must be a power to govern and to teach, and the corresponding duty of accepting orders and doctrine. No society can exist unless there be law and order, promulgated and maintained by an authoritative body. In the Church that authority has been established by Christ, with the added commission to preserve and propagate His revelation. It belongs to the successors of the Apostles under the Pope as Head. To that authority the Church owes obedience. The authority cannot be taken away, altogether or in part, except by Christ Who gave it; and so long as it is exercised within the limits set for it by Christ the only right response to it is full obedience. But, for Christian perfection, authority must be properly understood and treated by those who wield it and those subject to it, and obedience likewise needs intelligent and spiritual behaviour from both sides.

The one absolute authority is that of God. It is the power over us of our *author*; and it is creative, loving, personal, provident and unfailing. It evokes our love and our co-operation, and it enables us to complete our creation by achieving the perfection of personality of which God gives us the makings. It fosters our freedom and independence without which love is impossible. It is for our sake.

Delegated authority in the Church should be of the same kind. It is not an honour but a service. It is not a box-seat from which to crack a whip and handle the reins, but rather a particular power of unifying, of inviting and directing co-operation, of taking both the decision and the responsibility for it. The service which it exists to give is not condescending, impersonal, and hedged about with protocol. It is for the sake of the life of the Spirit and of the spreading of the Gospel; but it is also for the personal benefit of each member of the team. The book mentions consultation and discussion; and one of its favourite words is "dialogue". That word, over-used and worn thin since the Second Vatican Council, is now stiff with formality — it is a committee word. What is wanted is the word "presence", together with the reality it denotes, as in Our Lord's statement: "I am *among you* as one who serves". An absentee bishop, parish priest, or religious superior — absent by ignorance of his people,

their needs, their way of thinking and their desires, absent by having no work in common with them, and by living out of earshot — cannot be loved, and so robs the obedience of his subjects of the enlivening virtue.

“Presence” is the way of obedience as well. If those under authority stand away from their superior, they force him to keep his distance and to shout his orders. Presence, like union, is from both sides. The genuinely obedient are co-operative (and that means they must be workers: there can’t be co-operation in nothing). They take part in the formulation of a plan or policy (and superiors have to ensure that there *is* a policy, for, again, there can’t be co-operation in nothing). Their presence to the superior and his to them, on festive and working occasions, and in the ordinary encounters of family life, makes for the exchange of ideas casually but fruitfully, without the minutes, agenda and Any Other Business of formal dialogue.

The greater the attention to full development of personality, and the more successful the efforts to let everyone have a mind of his own and his own will, the greater the need for genuine goodness in those who exercise authority and those who obey. Impersonal authority and passive obedience produce no conflict because one term of the relationship is inert — a sleeping partner. When both are fully mature and alert, personalities could clash; but they make a fine team when their love for one another is as developed as their individuality.

*Obedience and the Church* is a translation of one whole number of “Seminarium”. It contains essays on all aspects of obedience and authority in the Church — obedience to the Pope, the bishop, the Council, and the day-to-day teaching authority called the *magisterium ordinarius*; the pastoral exercise of authority, authority and freedom, and training in obedience especially in seminaries. The distinguished authors write with sympathetic understanding of those who must rule and those who must obey, of modern attitudes, strengths and weaknesses, and, most urgently, of the part that obedience has in the life of the Spirit, of the love with which it must serve the common good, and of the example of obedience

we have in Our Blessed Lady, and, in Christ, of both obedience and authority. The key to the whole book is in the first essay, by Karl Rahner, on "Christ as the exemplar of Clerical Obedience". It shows our primary obligation to imitate Christ in His loving service, in the responsibility and freedom of his obedience, and in the sacrifice demanded by obedience and love: "He learned obedience by the things which He suffered", "He was made obedient even unto death", "Having loved His own, He loved them unto the end".

William Lawson, S.J.

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### LESSON TO BE LEARNT

**The Anguished American** by William J. Lederer; Gollancz, 35s; pp. 254.

**Thirteen Days** by Robert Kennedy; Pan Paperback, 5s; pp. 190.

At first thought, a vast distance, in terms of destruction, separates what might have been from what is; what Castro's Soviet missiles might have done to New York or Chicago from what Castro-inspired guerillas are actually doing now, for example, in Central America. At first thought, there is no comparison; there comes a feeling of relief. On reflection, however, there is the uncomfortable realization that the guerilla, in South-East Asia today, for example, may well be winning for Communism a world. Deterrence, in other words, is not defence. Its effect is not to prevent battle; merely to transfer it to the conventional field. The battle objective, meanwhile, remains the same. It is for the soul of the developing world.

It is not altogether surprising that, in the first stages of such a battle, those taught to rely on giant strength should find difficult the task of adapting their tactics to a situation in which giant strength is of little avail. It is important to realise that you cannot catch a thief with a tank. It does not follow, however, that the tank crew will turn overnight into good policemen. The Americans are in process of learning this lesson in Vietnam. It should surprise no one

that they have to learn it. It would be miraculous were anything else to prove the case. Those who know the Americans will realise further that learning the lesson may well take them longer than most, not because they are denser than most, but because of other qualities they possess.

In the first place, the American is a mechanically minded person; he is in love with gadgets. His tendency in Vietnam, in the fight with elusive guerillas, is to substitute gadgets for the build-up in himself of those qualities which will cause him in the end to achieve that mental superiority over the little brown man in black pyjamas who is his enemy. Until the American achieves this superiority, his Vietcong opponent will remain undefeated. Under the circumstances, it is consoling to note that he is in process now of gaining it. Again, the American serviceman is impatient and so is the American public from which he is drawn. Above all, the American serviceman, like Americans everywhere, is impatient to be loved. He hates more than anyone else to be hated. He combines this endearing quality with his love of gadgets to produce an outré range of conventional weapons designed the more quickly to win the war — in order that he may then be loved. He fails to realise that the use of such weapons builds up more hate against him, defeating, thereby, the very purpose for which they were employed. The love he thinks quick victory will bring him is blasted away by the methods he uses to make the victory quick. For example, the anger brought to rural people by defoliation outweighs the improved vision and so the prospect of quicker victory it gives the American fighting man. It is the method here that is wrong; jungle fighters are needed today in Vietnam, not the removal of the jungle itself. And so one might go on. The hardest lesson in Vietnam for many Americans is that the longest way round is the shortest way home. The computerization of rural pacification results means nothing. What counts is the man at the grass roots.

William Lederer shows himself well aware of this in an interesting if rather over-written and, at times, somewhat naive book. Throughout, it seems to me, he is hot and bothered as the co-author of *The Ugly American* should not

be hot and bothered. Surely, he has seen it all before. Why, then, is he so surprised at everything; so wrong about President Diem; so naive in his anger at the absence of effective democracy in Vietnam and the presence of corruption? Yet, side by side with these expressions of a rather shallow outlook, there are first-class chapters on the disadvantages suffered by the Americans through their inability to communicate in depth with the South Vietnamese and the effectiveness of the rural approach worked out by Lieutenant Colonel William R. Corson and his Marines with their Combined Action Programme. Lederer's chapter describing this type of activity is entitled "The Successful American". It is first class and his book is worth buying on its account alone.

All in all, *The Anguished American* is a useful book to read. It would have been far more useful had its author's outlook been less in-bred. One feels this is his main defect. For the writing of it he has relied far too much on his countrymen and their South Vietnamese friends. He would have done far better had he paid a visit to the Australian troops who are such magnificent jungle fighters and the South Koreans' famous Tiger Division whose pacification and rehabilitation work is already legendary. Equally, he might have gone to Malaysia and learnt what he could from those who defeated Communism in that country so successfully several years ago. He would have learnt a lot from conversations with those who run its jungle-warfare school and others who took part in Malaysia's own pacification programme.

The trouble with Lederer, I cannot help thinking, is that, for him, these would not have been significant opinions for the simple reason that their authors were not Americans. I am under the impression, after reading his pages, that, for William J. Lederer, God really is an American. This is a dangerous opinion and can bring a great deal of trouble. He ought to get rid of it.

Paul Crane, S.J.

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